

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 1805

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UY, CI, PA, BL, AR

SUBJECT: BORDABERRY IN BOLIVIA - BUILDING A REGIONAL APPROACH?

REFS: (A) MONTEVIDEO 1458, (B) MONTEVIDEO 1522, (C) SANTIAGO 4466

1. SUMMARY: THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED ON THE OCCASION OF THE PINOCHET VISIT TO URUGUAY AND THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED DURING THE BORDABERRY VISIT TO BOLIVIA IS STRIKING. BOTH EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT INTERVENTION IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND CALLED FOR STRENGTHENING HEMISPHERIC SECURITY THROUGH THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM. FONMIN BLANCO TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT THEY (URUGUAY, CHILE, PERHAPS PARAGUAY AND TO A LESSER EXTENT BOLIVIA) WISHED TO DISCUSS THE AREA OF POLITICAL DETERMINATION IN THE REGION TO GIVE MORE POSITIVE EFFECT TO THE SECURITY STRUCTURE OF THE INTER-AMERICAN SYSTEM. THESE AND OTHER INDICATIONS SUGGEST TO US A DEVELOPING REGIONAL APPROACH TO FOREIGN, PARTICULARLY HEMISPHERIC, POLICY WHICH COULD IMPACT ON OUR INTERESTS, INCLUDING IN SANTIAGO. WHILE WE DO NOT HAVE CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE
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AS TO A NEW REGIONAL APPROACH, WE BELIEVE THAT INDIRCZIONS ALREADY

ARE SUFFICIENT TO WARRANT A CONTINUING REVIEW BY THE POSTS CONCERNED PLUS A POSSIBLE LOOK FROM WASHINGTON WHICH HAS A BROADER PERSPECTIVE FROM WHICH TO JUDGE DEVELOPMENTS, INCLUDING VOTING PATTERNS.

2. DURING THE PINOCHET VISIT TO URUGUAY, PRESIDENTS BORDABERRY AND PINOCHET EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS AND GLOBAL POWER POLITICS. THIS CONCERN CENTERED ON INTERVENTION IN THEIR INTERNAL AFFAIRS, SUBVERSION, SEDITIOUS MOVEMENTS AND CAMPAIGNS TO DISCREDIT THEIR IMAGE. THE TWO PRESIDENTS THEN ADDED THAT THESE THREATS MADE IT INDISPENSABLE THAT "THE CONTINENT ASSUME THE RESPONSIBILITY OF GUARANTEEING ITS OWN SECURITY.." THE MECHANISM FOR DEFENSE WOULD BE IN ACCORD WITH THE INTER-AMERICAN SYS-

TEM AND THE RIO TREATY BUT THAT "...IT IS NECESSARY TO REINFORCE THE ACTION OF SUCH ORGANIZATIONS AND INSTRUMENTS."

3. THE LOCAL PRESS CARRIED THE TEXT OF A JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY PRESIDENTS BANZER AND BORDABERRY DURING THE URUGUAYAN PRESIDENT'S SUBSEQUENT VISIT TO BOLIVIA. THE SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE BORDABERRY-PINOCHET COMMUNIQUE AND THE BANZER-BORDABERRY COMMUNIQUE IS STRIKING. BANZER AND BORDABERRY EXPRESSED "DEEP CONCERN" OVER INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS "PROVOKED BY NEW FORMS OF INTERVENTION IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF STATES.." THEY ADDED THAT: 1) THE INTER-AMERICAN FORUMS HAD TO BE STRENGTHENED TO MORE EFFECTIVELY PRESERVE HEMISPHERIC SECURITY; 2) THEY WOULD WORK TOGETHER WITH OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE REGION SO THAT LATIN AMERICA MIGHT ASSERT ITS PRESENCE IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND 3) THEY WOULD ADVOCATE THAT ANY CHANGES WHICH MIGHT BE INTRODUCED IN THE OAS CHARTER WOULD STRENGTHEN COOPERATION FOR THE INTEGRAL DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY OF MEMBER STATES.

4. FOLLOWING THE PINOCHET VISIT (REFTELS A AND B) IT WAS OUR IMPRESSION THAT PINOCHET AND BORDABERRY HAD COMMON PERCEPTIONS AS TO THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE AND THAT A CLOSER COORDINATION OF FOREIGN, PARTICULARLY HEMISPHERIC, POLICY COULD BE EXPECTED TO FOLLOW. EMBASSY SANTIAGO (REFTEL C) AGREED, BUT ADDED THAT TO HAVE SIGNIFICANT IMPACT THE COORDINATION WOULD HAVE TO EXTEND TO OTHER COUNTRIES OF THE SOUTHERN CONE. WE BELIEVE THAT BOLIVIA NOW MAY BE COMING INTO THIS SAME FOLD AND THAT A COORDINATED APPROACH

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MIGHT WELL MANIFEST ITSELF AT THE OASGA IN SANTIAGO. IN FACT, THE AMBASSADOR ASKED FONMIN BLANCO TO COMMENT ON THE REFERENCES IN THE BANZER-BORDABERRY COMMUNIQUE TO STRENGTHENING HEMISPHERIC SECURITY THROUGH THE OAS.

BLANCO SAID THAT URUGUAY AND CHILE, PROBABLY PARAGUAY AND TO A LESSER EXTENT BOLIVIA, WERE INTERESTED IN RAISING THE SUBJECT FOR DISCUSSION IN SANTIAGO. BLANCO SAID THEY DO NOT NECESSARILY PLAN TO PROPOSE A RESOLUTION (ALTHOUGH, HE DID

NOT EXCLUDE THIS) BUT RATHER WISH TO EXPLORE IN DIALOGUE THE AREA OF POLITICAL DETERMINATION IN THE REGION TO GIVE MORE POSITIVE EFFECT TO THE SECURITY STRUCTURE WHICH ALREADY EXISTS THROUGH THE OAS CHARTER AND THE RIO TREATY. HE ALSO NOTED THAT THE BOLIVIANS HAD BEEN A BIT RETICENT ABOUT THE PART OF THE COMMUNIQUE STARTING WITH, "EXPRESAN SU HONDA PREOCUPACION.." BUT THAT THE MURDER OF GENERAL ZENTENO, NEWS OF WHICH ARRIVED WHILE THEY WERE DISCUSSING THIS POINT, ENDED THE BOLIVIANS' VACILLATION.

5. JUST PRIOR TO THE BOLIVIAN TRIP, BLANCO PAID A ONE-DAY VISIT TO HIS ARGENTINE COUNTERPART. HE DESCRIBED THE VISIT TO THE PRESS AS CORDIAL AND PRODUCTIVE AND MENTIONED THAT OAS MATTERS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED. PRIVATELY, (TO THE AMBASSADOR) BLANCO SAID THE VISIT HAD BEEN EXTREMELY POSITIVE AND ENCOURAGING AND THAT HE HAD A VERY MUCH LIKED THE ARGENTINE'S ATTITUDES TOWARDS SOUTHERN CONE AFFAIRS, POLICY TOWARD URUGUAY, BRAZIL, ETC. WE CERTAINLY CANNOT INFER FROM THIS THAT ARGENTINA WILL ADOPT THE POLICY LINE WHICH SEEMS TO BE EVOLVING AMONG BOLIVIA, CHILE, URUGUAY AND, PERHAPS, PARAGUAY, WITH WHOSE PRESIDENT BORDABERRY ALSO MET RECENTLY. HOWEVER, ARGENTINA'S DOMESTIC POLITICAL AND FOREIGN POLICY CONCERNS DO BEAR A RESEMBLANCE TO THOSE OF SOME OF ITS NEIGHBORS AND IT, TOO, IS COMING UNDER INCREASING ATTACK IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS AREA, A MAJOR CONCERN ADDRESSED BY BORDABERRY AND PINOCHET. IN TALKING TO THE AMBASSADOR, BLANCO DID NOT INCLUDE ARGENTINA IN THE GROUP WHICH MAY PRESS THE SECURITY ISSUE; BUT HE DID SAY THAT HE EXPECTED ARGENTINA'S FUTURE POSITION TO BE MUCH LESS IN HARMONY WITH THIRD WORLD POSITIONS.

6. AS A RESULT OF THE BOLIVIAN TRIP, WE ARE MORE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT A MORE COORDINATED SOUTHERN CONE (INCLUDING PARAGUAY, BOLIVIA AND PERHAPS BRAZIL) APPROACH IN FOREIGN, PARTICULARLY HEMISPHERIC, POLICY IS BEING DEVELOPED. DEPENDING UPON THE TURN THIS POLICY TAKES, IT COULD IMPACT ON US INTERESTS. WE
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DO NOT HAVE THE PERSPECTIVE HERE TO PROVIDE CONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE OF A REGIONAL APPROACH. HOWEVER, WE DO BELIEVE THAT THE POSSIBILITY THAT SUCH AN APPROACH MIGHT BE DEVELOPING SHOULD BE WATCHED CAREFULLY.
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